

November 7th, 2012

## Marketing Trends: Be Smart, Be Creative, Be A Leader

Published on Agency Access: The Marketing Lab

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### Question: How do I keep up with the trends and still retain my current marketing path?

I have a magnet on my refrigerator that says, “Change is good as long as I don’t have to do anything different!” **But the only thing that is consistent in this life is change.** So how does that apply to this question about trends, and whether or not to change your current marketing plan?

### Visual Trends: Are You a Follower or a Leader?

I’ve talked before about whether you want to be a leader or a follower – so how important are visual trends for you? Are you the kind of person who is looking to please everyone else or yourself? Do you want to be a trendsetter or a copycat? Keeping up with trends could be a bit like chasing rainbows, because by the time you’ve identified and then replicated that trend, the pot of gold could have moved already! So be aware of styles or subjects that seem to be popular, and then see what else you can bring to the table.



© Pete Barrett

Commercial advertising photographer [Pete Barrett](#), who's based both in Miami, Florida, and New England, says, *"I have found that following trends can be a dangerous game. Trends come and go and you can easily get stuck in the backseat doing something that is 'so yesterday,' and then find yourself scrambling to find the next 'it' thing. While technique has and will always continue to be important, my current body of work is more about capturing a moment or the feeling. I shoot what moves me and we market the best of what comes from that."*

### **Inspiration: Let Your Creative Soul do the Talking!**

Rather than keeping up with trends, consider instead what it is that inspires you. When I interview photographers, I always ask what inspires them, and I don't just mean naming other photographers. Any kind of artist can be inspired by myriad things, and different things might inspire different series – it could be a particular artist or writer, country or culture, food or music. For a photographer, it might be the way they focused on a particular topic, or maybe it was their treatment of the light or dark.



© David Bishop

New York food photographer [David Bishop](#) feels it's better to set trends, not follow them. For him, that's a formula for mediocrity. He says, *"The inspiration for my most successful personal work comes first from those universal life experiences that we all have, and additionally from many art mediums throughout history. Right now I'm particularly focused on the High Renaissance's penetrating use of light and Flemish fearless food compositions."*

## Marketing Trends: Making Smart Choices While Having a Good Time!

We all market our businesses in essentially the same way – it's the tools and marketing components that change over time. Years ago, not everyone had a website, but now you can't be in business without one. At the end of the day, we need to adapt to the ever-changing trends, but without compromising who we are. What do you have to offer, where are the people that might want what you do, and how do you reach them?



© Callie Lipkin

Chicago-based advertising and lifestyle photographer [Callie Lipkin](#) says, *“If I have lost a bid recently and I think that having more people of X demographic in X location, etc., might have helped me seal the deal, then I consider that for a future shoot. Alternatively, I tend to look around at other work and ask ‘What am I not seeing enough of (or any of)?’ And of course, there are just plain old ‘that would be fun!’ shoot ideas (like my 12 months of burlesque calendar). I try for some of each of those categories throughout the year to keep things fresh and exercise different creative muscles.”*